

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
P.O. Box 200901, Helena, Montana 59620-0901  
(406) 444-5300**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)**

August 12, 2008

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Pursuant to the Administrative Rules of Montana, 17.4.609, the following Environmental Assessment has been prepared by the Department of Environmental Quality concerning Donald Ray Mellen \dba\ Sunset Salvage a motor vehicle wrecking facility.

The purpose of the Environmental Assessment is to inform all interested governmental agencies, public groups or individuals of the proposed action and to determine whether or not the action may have a significant effect on the human environment. This Environmental Assessment will be circulated for a period of thirty **(30) days** at which time a decision will be made as to our future action.

If you care to comment on this proposed action, please do so within the allotted time.

Sincerely,

Bruce W. Meyer  
Motor Vehicle Recycling & Disposal Program  
(406) 444-2835 or e-mail at brmeyer@mt.gov

F:\CB5349\Word\LicForms\MellenEACovPageWeb.doc

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
P.O. Box 200901, Helena, Montana 59620-0901  
(406) 444-5300**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)**

**Division/Bureau:** Permitting & Compliance \ Motor Vehicle Recycling and Disposal Program

**Project or Application:** Donald Ray Mellen, Sunset Salvage, Superior, MT - A proposed private auto wrecking facility.

**Description of Project:** Donald Ray Mellen \ dba \ Sunset Salvage located at 256 Mullan Road, Superior, Montana, has submitted a motor vehicle wrecking facility license application to this department for review. The proposed motor vehicle wrecking facility will be situated in Mineral County. The legal description of the facility is in SW ¼ Section 20, Township 17 North, Range 26 West. The facility is approximately 2 acres in size.

**Benefits and Purpose of Proposal:** Donald Ray Mellen is proposing to establish a motor vehicle wrecking facility at 256 Mullan Road, Superior, MT. As required by the Motor Vehicle Recycling and Disposal Act, all wrecking facilities must be shielded from public view. "Public view" is defined as any point six (6) feet above the surface of the center of a public road from which the junk vehicles can be seen. By obtaining a motor vehicle wrecking facility license, Donald Ray Mellen would be allowed to: (1) Buy, sell, or deal in four or more vehicles per year of a type required to be licensed, for the purpose of wrecking, dismantling, disassembling, or substantially altering the form of the motor vehicle, (2) Buy or sell component parts, in whole or in part, and deal in second-hand junk vehicles, and (3) Purchase wrecked vehicles from insurance companies. Insurance companies are required by state law to sell junk vehicles only to licensed motor vehicle wrecking facilities. This business would provide a commercial source of automotive parts which would provide a cost saving to the consumer and would conserve energy and natural resources otherwise used to manufacture new parts.

**Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider:**

Alternative #1. Not to establish and license a facility at this location. This would limit public access to used automotive parts.

Alternative #2. To establish and license a facility at a location other than the one proposed in the license application. This would require the applicant to find and acquire by purchase or lease a different parcel of property for the proposed usage.

Alternative #3. To establish and license a facility at the proposed location.

**A listing and appropriate evaluation of mitigation, stipulations and other controls enforceable by the agency or another government agency:** Automotive fluids **must be** drained from the vehicles prior to the vehicle being placed in storage. All fluids removed from the vehicles must be captured over an impermeable surface, properly containerized, and properly stored for reuse, recycling, or proper disposal. This is a management method intended to alleviate the potential for groundwater contamination. This is a license condition enforceable by the agency.

CFCs (Freon) **must not** be released to the environment. This is a federally enforceable requirement and is enforced by the U.S. EPA.

**Recommendation:** N/A

**If an EIS is needed, and if appropriate, explain the reasons for preparing the EA:** N/A

**If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is an appropriate level of analysis:** Based on the information submitted for review with the license application, it is the preliminary determination of the department that an Environmental Assessment (EA) will provide an adequate review for this proposal.

**Other groups or agencies contacted or which may have overlapping jurisdiction:** Mineral County Commissioners.

**Individuals or groups contributing to this EA:** Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation; United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service; Montana Historical Society, and State Historic Preservation Office.

**EA prepared by** Bruce W. Meyer

**Date:** August 12, 2008

### **POTENTIAL IMPACT ON PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

|   | Maj | Mod | Min | None | Unkn | Att |
|---|-----|-----|-----|------|------|-----|
| 1. Terrestrial and Aquatic Life and Habitat                       |     |     | xxx |      |      | xxx |
| 2. Water Quality, Quantity, and Distribution                      |     |     | xxx |      |      | xxx |
| 3. Geology and Soil Quality, Stability and Moisture               |     |     | xxx |      |      | xxx |
| 4. Vegetation Cover, Quantity and Quality                         |     |     | xxx |      |      | xxx |
| 5. Aesthetics   |     |     |     | xxx  |      | xxx |
| 6. Air Quality  |     |     |     | xxx  |      |     |
| 7. Unique, Endangered, Fragile or Limited Environmental Resources |     |     |     | xxx  |      |     |
| 8. Demands on Environmental Resources of Water, Air, and Energy   |     |     |     | xxx  |      |     |
| 9. Historical and Archaeological Sites                            |     |     |     | xxx  |      | xxx |

\*Maj = Major; Mod = Moderate; Min = Minor; Unkn = Unknown; Att = Attached

CUMULATIVE AND SECONDARY IMPACTS: Upon closure of the facility and removal of the junk vehicles the aesthetics of the site will return to their original state.

### **POTENTIAL IMPACT ON HUMAN ENVIRONMENT**

|  | Maj | Mod | Min | None | Unkn | Att |
|--|-----|-----|-----|------|------|-----|
| 1. Social Structure and Mores                                      |     |     |     | xxx  |      |     |
| 2. Cultural Uniqueness and Diversity                               |     |     |     | xxx  |      |     |
| 3. Local and State Tax Base and Tax Revenue                        |     |     | xxx |      |      | xxx |
| 4. Agricultural or Industrial Production                           |     |     |     | xxx  |      |     |
| 5. Human Health  |     |     |     | xxx  |      |     |
| 6. Access to and Quality of Recreational and Wilderness Activities |     |     |     | xxx  |      |     |
| 7. Quantity and Distribution of Employment                         |     |     | xxx |      |      | xxx |
| 8. Distribution of Population                                      |     |     |     | xxx  |      |     |
| 9. Demands for Government Services                                 |     |     | xxx |      |      | xxx |
| 10. Industrial and Commercial Activities                           |     |     |     | xxx  |      |     |
| 11. Locally Adopted Environmental Plans and Goals                  |     |     |     | xxx  |      | xxx |

\*Maj = Major; Mod = Moderate; Min = Minor; Unkn = Unknown; Att = Attached

CUMULATIVE AND SECONDARY IMPACTS: The impacts will be minor for local and state tax base and tax revenue due to the size of the facility. The quantity and distribution of employment will be minor to none because of the number employed. The demands for government services will be minor to none and will be covered by county staff and state staff.

## **DONALD RAY MELLEN - ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

### General Comments

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality licenses and regulates motor vehicle wrecking facilities under the authority of the Motor Vehicle Recycling & Disposal Act (75-10-501, MCA) and Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM 17.50.201).

To be eligible for licensing, a proposed wrecking facility must:

- 1) Be in compliance with all existing zoning ordinances on the date the license application is submitted to the department.
- 2) Be capable of being shielded from view of any existing public road. If the license application is approved, the applicant must construct all necessary shielding prior to licensure.
- 3) Not create any adverse environmental impacts.

The department has made the preliminary determination that the applicant is in compliance with the existing zoning ordinances as of the date of the submittal of the application and can effectively shield the proposed facility from all public roads in the area. The purpose of the Environmental Assessment is to determine if the proposed motor vehicle wrecking facility can be established without posing significant adverse environmental impacts.

### **Potential Impacts on Physical Environment**

1. Terrestrial & aquatic life habitats
4. Vegetation cover, quantity and quality

The proposed site of the wrecking facility is a 2-acre parcel owned by the applicant. This facility will be located at 256 Mullan Road, Superior, MT. The legal description of the facility is in SW ¼ Section 20, Township 17 North, Range 26 West. The shielding will consist of a eleven foot wooden fence with gaps. The fence will shield the north, east, west, and south sides of the facility.

This wrecking facility is surrounded by some residential homes on the east and west sides, Old Mullan Road is located on the south side of the property, and open tracts of land to the north. Most of the surrounding area would serve as habitat for birds and small mammals.

The establishment of a motor vehicle wrecking facility will disturb and displace a minor portion of the vegetation and wildlife habitat within the proposed location. The impacts caused by the wrecking facility should not be significant to the area's ecosystem since similar habitat surrounds the proposed site.

2. Water quality, quantity, and distribution

The properties in this area are on wells. The static water level in this area varies from 126 to 39 feet. This proposal is reasonably expected to not have any impacts on the quality, quantity, and distribution of the ground water.

3. Geology and soil quality, stability, and moisture

The soils in the vicinity of the site are classified by the U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service as Tally series. This series is well drained. This soil is used mainly for small grains, hay land, and pasture.

Waste anti-freeze, gasoline, and lubricating oils contain petroleum distillates, heavy metals, and possibly toxic compounds. If improperly disposed of, these fluids can cause surface and groundwater degradation. The applicant proposes to properly recycle all of the above-named automotive fluids. Some residual lubricating oils and anti-freeze may drip from the vehicles stored at the facility. This residual dripping is not expected to be significant or result in heavy soil accumulations.

## 5. Aesthetics

The applicant plans to use a eleven-foot fence on all four sides of the facility to shield it from public view. An onsite evaluation by department personnel determined the eleven-foot fence would be adequate to meet the shielding requirements of the Motor Vehicle Recycling & Disposal Act.

"Public view" is defined as any point six (6) feet above the surface of the center of a public road from which the junk vehicles can be seen.

## 9. Historical and archaeological sites

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) conducted a cultural resource file search for this property. According to (SHPO) records there have been a few previously recorded sites with the designated search locales. In addition to the sites there have been a few previously conducted cultural resource inventories done in the areas.

It is SHPO's position that any structure over fifty years of age is considered historic and is potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. If any structures are to be altered and are over fifty years old we would recommend that they be recorded and determination of their eligibility be made.

(SHPO) anticipates a low likelihood cultural properties will be impacted. (SHPO) therefore, feels that a recommendation for a cultural resource inventory is unwarranted at this time. (SHPO) would ask that if cultural materials be inadvertently discovered during this project that their office be contacted and the site investigated.

## **Potential Impacts on Human Environment**

### 3. Local & state tax base & tax revenue

### 7. Quantity and distribution of employment

The establishment of the proposed motor vehicle wrecking facility may provide a source of used motor vehicles or component parts for sale to the public. The issuance of a motor vehicle wrecking facility license will allow the applicant to: (1) Buy, sell, or deal in four or more vehicles per year of a type required to be licensed for the purpose of wrecking, dismantling, disassembling, or substantially altering the form of the motor vehicle, (2) Buy or sell component parts, in whole or in part, and deal in second-hand motor vehicle parts, and (3) Purchase wrecked vehicles from insurance companies. Insurance companies are required by state law to sell junk vehicles only to licensed motor vehicle wrecking yards.

The establishment of a motor vehicle wrecking facility may create an additional labor requirement and may result in additional employment. This employment and the employment requirements for the support services of this yard may provide a neutral to positive employment impact for the community.

## 9. Demands for governmental services

The issuance of a motor vehicle wrecking facility license will require administrative and inspection services of the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and the Mineral County Junk Vehicle Program personnel.

## 11. Locally adopted environmental plans and goals

The establishment of a motor vehicle wrecking facility at this location does **not** conflict with any existing zoning ordinances as certified by Tim Read, Sanitarian / Planner, Mineral County, Superior, MT.

**Effect on Adjoining Landowners and Land Uses**  
**Other Site-Specific Information**

Information gathered for the preparation of this Environmental Assessment reveal that directly adjacent to the proposed location are residential lots, vacant tracts and the Old Mullan Road. The location of this wrecking facility should have minor or **no** impact on the adjoining landowners and land uses.

F:\CB5349\Word\Lic\MellenEA08.doc